

Decide how you'll reward yourself. Reward yourself with a nonfood item or activity when you reach your goals. For example, treat yourself to a movie or buy a new plant for the garden.

What kinds of physical activity can help me?

Many kinds of physical activity can help you take care of your diabetes. Even small amounts of physical activity can help. You can measure your physical activity level by how much effort you use.

Doctors suggest that you aim for 30 to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity most days of the week. Children and adolescents with type 2 diabetes who are 10 to 17 years old should aim for 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity every day.

Your health care team can tell you more about what kind of physical activity is best for you. They can also tell you when and how much you can increase your physical activity level.

Light physical activity. Light activity is easy. Your physical activity level is light if you

- are breathing normally
- are not sweating
- can talk normally or even sing

Moderate physical activity. Moderate activity feels somewhat hard. Your physical activity level is moderate if you

- are breathing quickly, yet you're not out of breath
- are lightly sweating after about 10 minutes of activity
- can talk normally, yet you can't sing

Vigorous physical activity. Vigorous, or intense, activity feels hard. Your physical activity level is vigorous if you

- are breathing deeply and quickly
- are sweating after a few minutes of activity
- can't talk normally without stopping for a breath

Not all physical activity has to take place at the same time. You might take a walk for 20 minutes, lift hand weights for 10 minutes, and walk up and down the stairs for 5 minutes.

Breaking the physical activity into different groups can help. You can

- do **aerobic** exercise
- do strength training to build muscle
- do stretching exercises
- add extra activity to your daily routine

Do Aerobic Exercise

Aerobic exercise is activity that uses large muscles, makes your heart beat faster, and makes you breathe harder. Doing moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise for 30 to 60 minutes a day most days of the week provides many benefits. You can even split up these minutes into several parts.



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Talk with your health care team about how to warm up and cool down before and after you exercise. Start slowly, with 5 to 10 minutes a day, and add a little more time each week. Try

- walking briskly
- hiking
- climbing stairs
- swimming or taking a water-aerobics class
- dancing
- riding a bicycle outdoors or a stationary bicycle indoors
- taking an exercise class
- playing basketball, tennis, or other sports
- in-line skating, ice skating, or skateboarding
- other things I can do: _____

Read more about physical activity for older adults in *Exercise & Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging* at www.nia.nih.gov.

Do Strength Training to Build Muscle

Strength training is a light to moderate physical activity that builds muscle and keeps your bones healthy. When you have more muscle and less fat, you'll burn more calories because muscle burns more calories than fat, even between exercise sessions. Burning more calories can help you lose and keep off weight.

Whether you're a man or a woman, you can do strength training with hand weights, elastic bands, or weight machines two to three times a week. You can do strength training at home, at a fitness center, or in a class. Start with a light weight and slowly increase the size of your weights as your muscles become stronger.



You can do strength training with hand weights, elastic bands, or weight machines two to three times a week to build muscle.

Do Stretching Exercises

Stretching exercises are a light to moderate physical activity that both men and women can do. For example, yoga is a type of stretching that focuses on your breathing and helps you relax. Your health care team can suggest whether yoga is right for you.

Even if you have problems moving or balancing, certain types of yoga can help. For example, chair yoga has stretches you can do when sitting in a chair. When you stretch, you increase your flexibility, lower your stress, and help prevent sore muscles.



Chair yoga has stretches you can do when sitting in a chair.

Add Extra Activity to Your Daily Routine

Increase daily activity by spending less time watching TV or at the computer. Try these simple ways to add light, moderate, or vigorous physical activities in your life every day:

- Walk around while you talk on the phone.
- If you have kids or grandkids, visit a zoo or a park with them.
- Take a walk through your neighborhood.
- When you watch TV, get up and walk around the room during commercials.
- Do chores, such as work in the garden or rake leaves, clean the house, or wash the car.
- Stretch out your chores. For example, make two trips to take the laundry downstairs instead of one.
- Park at the far end of the shopping center parking lot and walk to the store.

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Stretch or walk around instead of taking a coffee break and eating.
- Other things I can do: _____

Read more about physical activity in these booklets at www.win.niddk.nih.gov:

- *Active at Any Size!*
- *Energize Yourself and Your Family!*
- *Walking...A Step in the Right Direction*



Take the stairs instead of the elevator.